

REPORTED INCIDENCE OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Objective

By 1990, injuries and deaths to children inflicted by abusing parents should be reduced by at least 25 percent.

Explanatory Notes

Cases are the number of abused and neglected children (ages 0-17) reported to the N.C. central child abuse registry. A case is confirmed or not confirmed following investigation by the resident county's department of social services. North Carolina's mandatory child abuse reporting law was passed in 1971, but data prior to Fiscal Year 1977 may not be comparable to data reported in FY77 and later. Reported cases do not reflect actual incidence; a national study conducted in 1980 found that only one case in three of child abuse was reported to a child protective agency.³ National data are not available for this objective.

Findings

Since FY77, an increase in reported cases of child abuse and neglect was observed in each year except 1982. Confirmed cases also increased every year but one. In recent years, reported cases have increased rapidly. Reported cases rose to 45,617 in 1990, an increase of nearly 1,000 percent since 1977! Confirmed cases increased nearly 900 percent over the same period. About one-third of all reported cases are confirmed.

Similar National Year 2000 Objectives

- o Reverse to less than 25.2 per 1,000 children the rising incidence of maltreatment of children younger than age 18.
- o Reverse to less than 5.7 per 1,000 children the rising incidence of physical abuse of children younger than age 18.
- o Reverse to less than 2.5 per 1,000 children the rising incidence of sexual abuse of children younger than age 18.
- o Reverse to less than 3.4 per 1,000 children the rising incidence of emotional abuse of children younger than age 18.
- o Reverse to less than 15.9 per 1,000 children the rising incidence of neglect of children younger than age 18.

Data Sources

North Carolina: Child Protective Service Unit, Division of Social Services